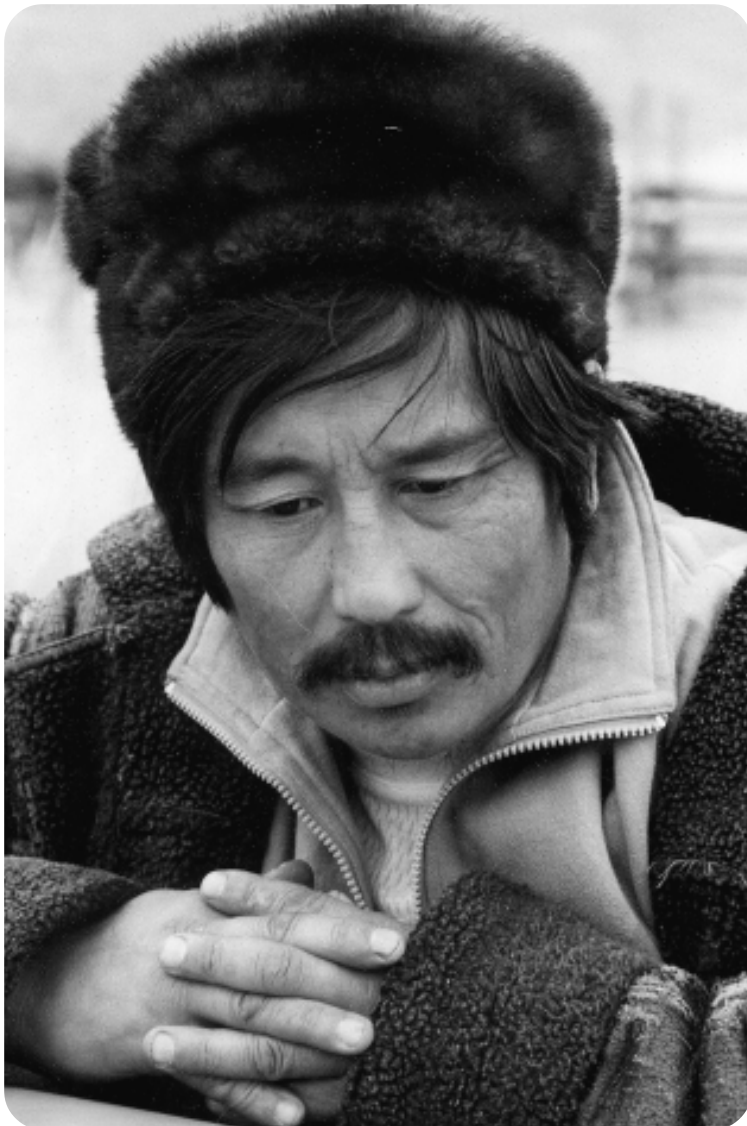


# Translators' News

Institute for Bible Translation

www.IBTnet.org

July-September  
2002



## The First New Testament to the Tuvins in Southern Siberia....

The first New Testament in the Tuvyn language was officially presented to the Tuvyn people on May 17, 2002, in Kyzyl, the capital city of Tuva. The Tuvyns number approximately 250,000, most of whom are Buddhists and Shamanists. The number of Christians, now about 2000, has continued to increase rapidly since the beginning of the 1990's.

"The translation team had many trials in conjunction with the presentation of the New Testament", explains Vitaly Voinov, the exegetical checker for the project. "The main translator, Nikolai,

### ONWARD AND UPWARD

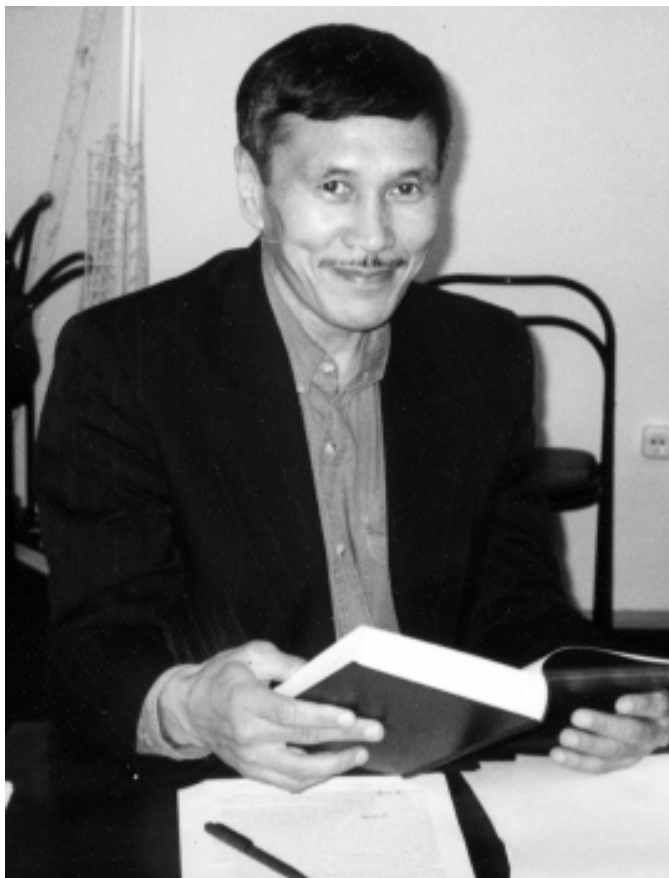
"The work of IBT is a most worthy ministry to support", a man said recently! Naturally, this does not mean that everything else is dropped in favor of IBT's work. However, it shows that others are as convinced as we are that Bible translation must be given a high priority—it must move forward!

IBT celebrates its 30th Year of operation next year. Our beginning was unassuming and the future was uncertain. The road has been lined with both difficulties and blessings. In 1973, Bible work was constantly opposed by the Soviet powers in Moscow. How different it is today. Now Bible translation is solidly anchored right there in Moscow. Our present colleagues continue to uphold the original vision and strongly support the ongoing work. Today, the Moscow workers make up IBT's largest office, moving forward with great enthusiasm. The other offices all around the world support the translation work with a passion and urgency to get the Word of God into the hands of people. God's Word is not bound. (II Tim. 2:9)

In our Translators' News, we inform you about what happens as a result of your gifts to IBT. We have shared with you about the pulse of the work we are involved in, the life-giving work of Bible Translation. Won't you please tell others about IBT and encourage them also to partner with us in this great ministry. The prayers, gifts, and partnership of so many of you is what lifts IBT's work upward!



Stefan Rizell  
International Director  
Rizell@IBTnet.org



*The Tuvian translator with the New Testament*

lost his father the week before the presentation, as he suddenly became ill and died. Two days following this personal tragedy, Nikolai's nephew also died. Others on the translation team experienced other challenges and opposition—all for the purpose of defeating, discouraging, and derailing us from the main task at hand—to present the New Testament to the Tuvian people.”

“A few weeks before the presentation we personally invited politicians, journalists, authors, librarians, language experts, pastors and a host of others who we thought would be interested”, says Vitaly. “However, no politicians showed up! But church leaders and pastors from all of the denominations were present, as were many linguists and other experts in Tuvian literature. One interested participant was pastor Daniel Cizuk from Citykyrkan in Stockholm, a church that has supported the translation project from its beginning.”

Dr. David Clark of the United Bible Societies has been the Translation Consultant for the project. In his presentation he mentioned, among other things: “I have worked for 40 years with many translation projects in various languages, but I can't remember ever having worked with anyone like Nikolai! He is very gifted, and is willing to accept constructive criticism, but will stand firm when he knows he is right!”

“Every serious work, like every long road, begins with the first steps that are taken”, said Nikolai, the translator, who is also a well-known author and poet in Tuva. “The very first attempts at translation in the Tuvian language were made in 1989 by Tuvians, who had become Christians while in prison. Although they had a passion to read the Bible in their mother tongue, it was not enough! It was necessary to understand literary Tuvian, and to have the assistance of theologians, as well as the guidance of experts in the principles of Bible translation. IBT was able to organize such a translation team over a period of years. It wasn't the gathering together of a group of specialists that was important, but that the group could work in unity and understand each other's special gifting.”

“Publishing of the New Testament in Tuvian is a joyous and moving experience”, continued Nikolai. “The Tuvian believers are waiting anxiously for this Book, but of course it is also intended for ALL Tuvian people. Our translation team hopes that God's Word will reach into the hearts of the Tuvians as they read and hear it in their language. Tuvian readers will receive the call to eternal life!”

Another participant said: “We have not seen a book of such life-changing importance for a long time. This text brings changes to a person's character and turns his spirit towards God. Many social problems in our community will be solved. I would like to make a very important observation: Books we read in our mother tongue help us to retain our cultural heritage, the heritage which has been given to us by God. In the Gospels we see how the Lord Jesus Christ loved people, and we can learn from Him how to relate to our own people.”

The translation of the Old Testament is now in progress—and in a few years, the Tuvians will have the entire Bible in their mother tongue!

*Barbro Lindström*



*The Children's Bible has also been published in Tuvian*



## ...and the Four Gospels for the Chuvash people by the Volga River

The Chuvash language has a strong presence in Chuvashya, thanks to Ivan Yakovlev (1848-1930), who has been instrumental in creating the modern Chuvash literary language, founded schools, and translated many important literary works into Chuvash. Yakovlev also translated the New Testament (Printed 1911) and portions of the Old Testament—IBT reprinted his New Testament in 1973. These texts are still used in Orthodox church liturgy. Ivan Yakovlev's spiritual testament to the Chuvash people, written in August 1921, is a moving message. "More than anything else, hold fast your faith in God...continue that which I have begun, give the Holy Scriptures to the Chuvash people...spread the light of the Gospel among the many nationalities living in Eastern Russia..."

In April, each year, Ivan Yakovlev's birthday is celebrated with great festivities in the capital city of Cheboksary. April 2002 marked his 154th. In the middle of the celebrations, on April 24, IBT presented the completed translation of the Four Gospels to the Chuvash people.

Led by Olga Denisova, the Chuvash Minister of Culture, fifty people participated in the presentation ceremonies.

With dramatic effects an actor read from Luke 15 about the Prodigal Son, and an Orthodox priest referred to that

parable in his presentation. "In the Chuvash language, this text enters deep into the soul," he said. "When we are standing at the brink of destruction, the Word of the Lord comes to us and rescues us. It keeps us from going under. I am convinced that during these 30 years that IBT has translated the Bible, people in the far reaches of Russia have stood at the brink of the abyss. But God's Word has come to them in their mother tongue, they have been rescued from the brink of destruction, and have come back to the Loving Father who received them with great joy."

"Thank you for the unique work of translating the Four Gospels into Chuvash," said the director of the National Library. "The text is understood and available to everyone. The Book will help us grasp the meaning of life and give us answers to life's problems. This unusual Book cleanses and changes a person's intellect and soul. We are convinced that this gift will meet the needs of the readers and that it will have a place of honor in the libraries of our Republic."

"Our goal in the translation of the Four Gospels", said the translator, Peter Yakovlev, "has been to give the Chuvash people Scriptures to read at home. We envision the Book lying on the kitchen table, easily attainable to the student and the pensioner, and understood by everyone." Work is in progress to complete the entire New Testament in the Chuvash language!

*Barbro Lindström*



*Chuvash Minister of Culture Olga Denisova*

## IBT celebrates 30 years in 2003!

Under this heading we will be bringing you stories about how it was in the beginning....

### *The Bible came back after 18 years*

Viktor Dudnik is a pastor in Mariupol, Ukraine. He was one of those who, during the Communist era, put his life on the line. His home was searched by the KGB untold times for the presence of unlawful and forbidden literature.

“A few years ago something incredible happened,” says Viktor. “A fellow pastor had a newly converted man in his congregation who formerly worked for the KGB. He came to my colleague with a Russian Goetze Bible (published by IBT) and confessed to immense feelings of guilt. ‘I took this Bible a long time ago, from the home of a pastor, as we raided his home’ he said. ‘It was such a beautiful book that I did not want to destroy it, but gave it instead to my mother. She read from the Bible and became a believer. She began to pray for me and I am now a Christian too. I would like to return this Bible and ask for forgiveness, but I cannot remember the pastor’s name.’ When I heard what was written in the Book, I knew it was the Bible that Boris Arapovic of IBT, gave me many years ago,” said Viktor. “The Bible came back after 18 years!”

### IBT has printed the following during January – May 2002:

<u>Bibles:</u>	
Georgian	21,200
<u>New Testaments:</u>	
Turkmen	5,000
<u>Stories About Jesus:</u>	
Kurmanji-Kurdish	2,500
Georgian	2,000
<u>Bible Portions:</u>	
Mordvin-Moksha Matthew	3,000
Tajik Gospel of John	2,000
Chechen Genesis, Esther and Jonah	1,000

### Printing in Process

#### *The following books are presently being printed:*

Kalmyk New Testament  
Dargin Gospel of Mark  
Bashkir Acts  
Altai Children’s Bible

### The project of the month

With your special gift this summer you will support the continuing translation work on the 15 New Testaments that will be printed in 2005. Three are completed – 12 remain to be finished over the next 3 years!

## *Institute for Bible Translation*

Institute for Bible Translation was founded in Stockholm, Sweden in 1973, its main task being to publish Bibles for “non-Slavic peoples in Slavic countries.” In the CIS 130 different languages are spoken. Since then we have worked on Bible translation in more than 80 of these languages. We have printed the Bible or portions of it in about 50 languages, including two first whole Bibles, in Moldavian and Tajik, and 14 New Testaments. We welcome your support for our continuing efforts in bringing the Word to those in the former Soviet nations. All peoples of the world should have the Bible available in their native language.

**In North America:**  
**Institute for Bible Translation\***  
PO Box 216  
Alhambra, CA 91802  
Tel. 1-626-281-4740  
Fax 1-626-458-0677  
E-mail: [ibtna@IBTnet.org](mailto:ibtna@IBTnet.org)

**In the UK:**  
**Institute for Bible Translation**  
PO Box 6481  
Colchester, CO4 3AF  
E-mail: [ibtuk@IBTnet.org](mailto:ibtuk@IBTnet.org)

**Main Office:**  
**Institute for Bible Translation**  
Box 20100  
SE-10460 Stockholm, Sweden  
Tel. +46-8-722-2340  
Fax +46-8-722-2345  
E-mail: [info@IBTnet.org](mailto:info@IBTnet.org)

IBT also has offices in Russia, Finland, Canada and South Africa

\*Institute for Bible Translation is a US registered non-profit organization. IRS approved receipts will be issued for income tax purposes, for all contributions to Bible translation, publishing and printing.